

WHAT IS CLAIMED IS:

1. A handheld ultraviolet sterilization device comprising:
a cold cathode ultraviolet lamp;
a chassis having a light exposure window;
a power inverter; and
a DC power source;
wherein said lamp, said power inverter, and said DC power source are electrically connected to each other and are encased within said chassis.
2. The device of claim 1, wherein said light exposure window is protected by a retractable protective shield.
3. The device of claim 1, wherein said power source is an AA battery source.
4. The device of claim 3, wherein said AA battery source includes two AA batteries.
5. The device of claim 1, wherein said power source is a lithium battery.
6. The device of claim 1, wherein said power source is
7. The device of claim 1 further comprising a child-safety features.
8. The device of claim 8 further comprising a first safety component and a second safety component, wherein said child-safety feature is a keyless feature that requires simultaneous physical displacement of first safety component and said second safety component for said ultraviolet lamp to be operable.
9. The device of claim 8, wherein said first safety component is an on/off switch and said second safety component is an electrical connection to said protective shield, and wherein said child-safety feature is operable only when said on/off switch is depressed while said protective shield is moved to an open position.

10. The device of claim 1 further comprising a reflector arranged within said chassis behind said lamp, so as to reflect light from said lamp outward through said light exposure window.